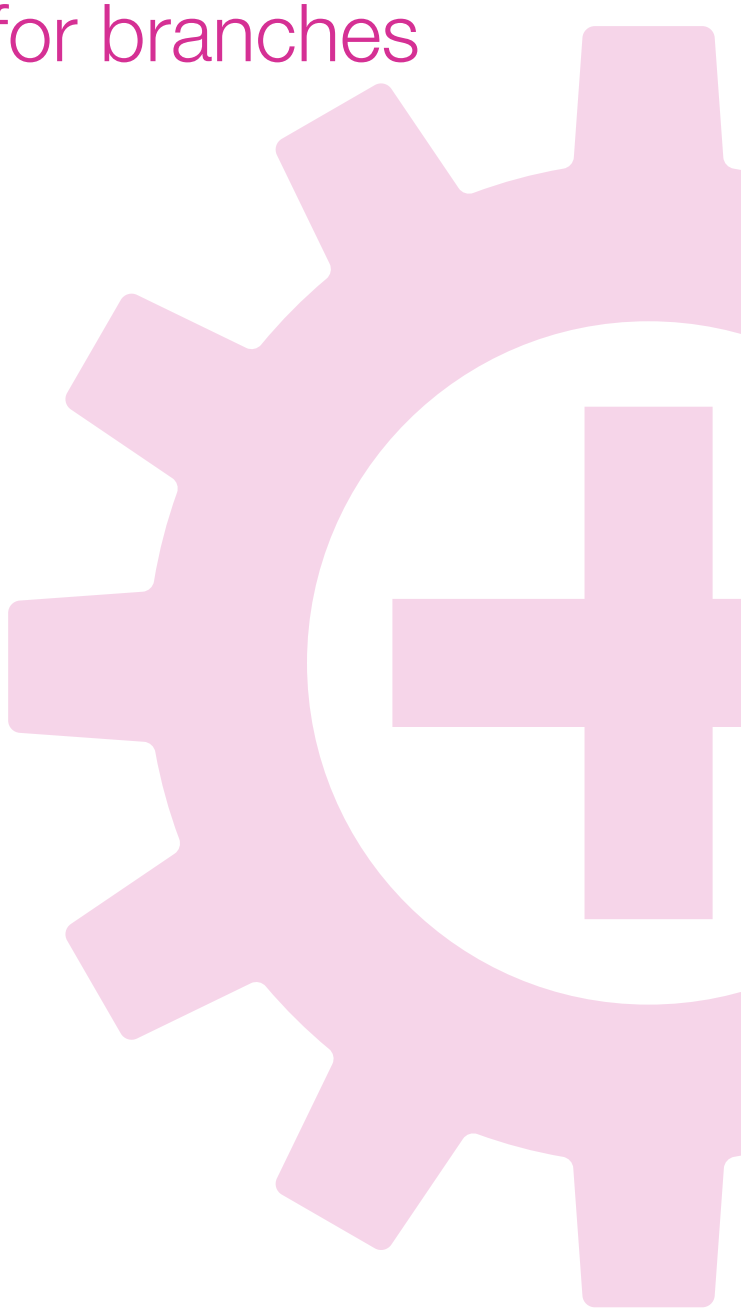
# mentalhealth MATTERS

## Resource pack for branches



UNISON
*the public service union*

# UNISON RESOURCE PACK

This resource pack is to highlight UNISON's national campaign on mental health 'Mental Health Matters'.

It aims to inform branches about the campaign and to provide information and resources for branches who would like to support the campaign locally or start their own campaign.

The resource pack contains the following sections:

1. Factsheet on mental health funding
2. Key findings from UNISON's survey of mental health staff
3. Detailed report of UNISON's survey of mental health staff
4. Template letter to CCG leads regarding mental health funding
5. Template letter to councillors regarding mental health funding
6. Factsheet on building a local mental health campaign
7. Press release which can be used as a template for local press releases
8. Mental Health Matters PowerPoint presentation
9. Mental Health Matters A5 campaign leaflet
10. Mental Health Matters A4 campaign poster

# Mental health funding

Chronic underfunding of mental health has meant there have been cuts to services, increased waiting times and service users reaching crisis point before they can access services.

UNISON wants mental health services to be fairly funded and for there to be recognition that mental health is as important as physical health. Without fair funding, services will struggle to improve, staff will have to cope with under-resourced teams and service users won't receive the services they need.

- Analysis by the King's fund shows that in 2013/14 and 2014/15 40 percent of mental health trusts had reductions in their income.

- In February 2016, the mental health taskforce drafted the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health, highlighting areas of concern including the underfunding of mental health services. It states: "*Mental health services have been chronically underfunded. We know that the presence of poor mental health can drive a 50 per cent increase in costs in physical care*".

- UNISON's survey of members working in mental health highlighted showed that 70% of respondents said that, as a result of cuts, there were increased waiting times for services and 50% said clients had to reach crisis point before accessing services.

- Analysis undertaken by the Health Service Journal at the end of 2016 found that almost a quarter of CCGs failed to increase their spending on mental health in line with their overall budget increases, thereby failing to meet 'parity of esteem'.

- Further reports from the Health Service Journal in March 2017 highlighted that some Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) were failing to adequately identify mental health as an area in which spending will increase. In December 2016, NHS England advised that they would offer support to STPs not doing enough around mental health.

Following the details of the CCGs failing to meet parity of esteem, UNISON wrote to NHS England Chief Executive Simon Stevens raising our concerns that money meant for mental health services should be spent on those services and that CCGs had failed to increase spending adequately. NHS England replied to state that they had asked CCGs to share their planned spend with the main mental health providers in their areas 'to facilitate shared ownership of local plans to deliver the 5 year forward view for mental health'.

Template letters were made available to branches of those CCGs identified, as raising awareness directly with the CCG, if possible with management could allow for a clear message to decision makers, about the importance of funding.

It is essential that we continue to campaign on mental health to ensure that mental health funding is not used to prop up other services.

UNISON is calling for more detailed information on how money will be allocated, to ensure that money meant for mental health gets through to services as intended.

**Action for branches**

- Branches can help place pressure on CCGs by highlighting the current state of mental health services in their area. Currently, CCGs allocate spending for mental health services and so it is important that we remain aware of spending allocated.

- Use the template letters to CCGs and councillors and amend depending on mental health services locally. Highlight to councillors that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees should ask for sight of CCG spending on mental health if it is not increased in line with budget increases.

- Access NHS England's mental health dashboard here to track performance of you local CCG.

- Write to your MP to ask them to sign UNISON's Early Day Motion calling for fair funding for mental health services. Find out about the EDM and email your MP at www.unison.org.uk/our-campaigns/mental-health-matters/

# Key findings from UNISON's mental health staff survey

**UNISON conducted a survey of mental health staff in June 2016. The findings may help to highlight locally or with employer the pressures and issues affecting mental health workers.**

- UNISON's survey received over 1100 responses
- 81% work for an NHS organisation, 11% for a local authority
- Staff work in various roles including as mental health nurses, community psychiatric nurses, support workers, psychotherapists and as administrators
- As a result of these cuts, a worrying majority (89%) reported an increased workload for staff in their area and almost seven in ten (69%) stated it is more difficult to provide effective services

**Impact on service users**

- 85% feel their organisation/service has faced cuts
- 70% of staff reported there was an increase in waiting times for services
- 68% stated there was less access to services
- 53% stated that cuts to mental health services have meant that some service users were only accessing services at crisis point

**Impact of cuts on workforce**

- Two-thirds work unpaid overtime 1-2 times a week (with half of those working at least 3-4 times a week)
- Nearly nine in ten staff (89%) reported they had increased workloads
- Over 80% said staff were considering leaving their jobs due to cuts
- 3/4 of staff said they felt 'burnt-out'

**Support from employers**

- 61% thought their organisation did not look after the well being of its staff
- Over two thirds (68%) reported that no training around mental health stigma and how it could be tackled in the NHS was provided by their organisation

**UNISON is calling for:**

**Fair Government funding** for mental health services

**Improved training** for mental health workers

**Support for the mental health and wellbeing of staff**

**A commitment to tackle stigma** around mental health

Find out more about the issues and how to get involved at unison.org.uk/mentalhealth

# 2016 SURVEY FINDINGS REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mental health services in the UK have been chronically underfunded for a number of years. This is having a negative impact on mental health workers who are struggling to cope in under-resourced teams, and those seeking support unable to access services they need.

UNISON's 2016 mental health survey found over two thirds (68%) of respondents stated there was less access to services as a result of funding cuts. *A recent Public Accounts Report*[1] found that only a quarter of people thought to need mental health services have access to them. It recognised that there are different ways individuals initially seek help, and that the processes involved in referrals often result in individuals experiencing delays.

Access to services is a key part of ensuring those who need help are able to begin their recovery. It is essential that the government acts to provide fair funding for mental health services, with a guarantee that money provided goes to those who need it most.

Mental health services need to be prioritised and given recognition in the same way as physical health. NHS England recognises that "people with poor physical health are at higher risk of experiencing mental health problems and people with poor mental health are more likely to have poor physical health". This is relevant not only in England, but across the UK. Prioritising mental health could improve the way service users are supported, as they would be able to access a range of appropriate services at the right time.

### What we are asking for

- Fair funding from the government for mental health services, with a guarantee that money goes to those that need it.
- Mental health services prioritised by the government with recognition of the links to physical health.
- A commitment from employers to improve the training of mental health workers creating a well informed workforce able to deliver the highest standards of care.
- Commitment to support the mental health and wellbeing of NHS workers.
- A greater commitment from the government to help the NHS tackle the stigma that continues to exist around mental ill health.

1 http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmpubacc/80/8002.htm?utm_source=80&utm_medium=fullbullet&utm_campaign=modulereports

### *Introduction*

Mental health workers are struggling to cope due to staff shortages and poorly funded services. Mental health services in the UK have been severely underfunded for many years. A BBC freedom of information request carried out earlier this year, revealed that budgets for mental health trusts fell by 2% from 2013/14 to 2014/15, when hospital trusts' budgets were rising by 2.6%. Failure to dedicate required funding to mental health services has led to under-resourced teams and service users unable to access the help they need. According to the Department of Health, the estimated cost of mental health to the economy, NHS and society as a whole is approximately £105bn in England. Yet mental health has not been prioritised in the same way as physical health.

In February 2016, the *Five Year Forward View for Mental Health*[2], a report focussing on services in England, was submitted by the independent Mental Health Taskforce. The taskforce was chaired by the chief executive of the mental health charity Mind and highlighted what it described as the 'chronic underfunding' of mental health services. It examined the scale of challenges including staff shortages, access to services and issues faced by children requiring support in England. Many of these concerns are faced by staff and service users UK wide too.

UNISON recognises that although funding is a core element of the success of mental health service delivery, multiple factors are at play in this complex field. The union welcomes the approach outlined in NHS England's Five Year Forward View for Mental Health, detailing three areas of focus, allowing for a triple approach. The three areas are providing: '*equal status to mental and physical health, equal status to mental health staff and equal funding for mental health services'.*

UNISON welcomes plans by the government to implement the Taskforce proposals with extra funding. But the key now is to ensure that this money gets to where it is needed.

### *UNISON survey*

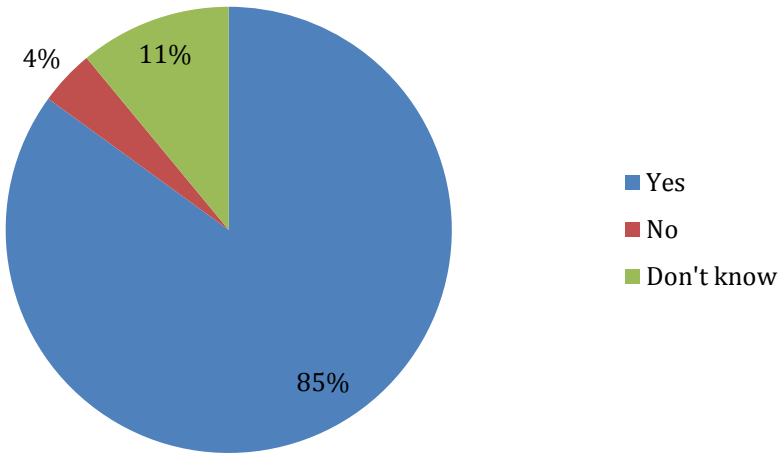
In May 2016, UNISON undertook a survey of staff working in mental health. The survey received almost 1,200 responses from individuals including mental health nurses, psychotherapists and social workers. It sought to capture staff views and experiences about their current roles as well as gain insight into how they thought mental health services could be improved in the UK. The majority of respondents – over four-fifths – (81%) worked for the NHS, followed by one in ten (11%) for a local authority. A small minority (3%) worked for a private company, with the remaining respondents employed by various organisations including charities and social enterprises.

### *Key findings*

Over four out of five (85%) said that their organisation or service had faced cuts. These cuts had caused an increased workload for staff, increased difficulty in providing effective services and staff spending more time on paperwork.

[2] https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Mental-Health-Taskforce-FYFV-final.pdf

***Do you feel that your organisation/service has faced cuts?***




Staff working in mental health said there were fewer members of staff and increased workloads. This meant they were often stretched beyond their capability, although they continued to work to support the recovery of clients. When asked how the effect of cuts had affected service users, seven in ten (70%) said an increase in waiting times for services was the largest impact.

Two thirds (68%) stated that there was less access to services. The average mental health bed occupancy rate has risen steadily for the last few years, with a rate of 88.9% recorded for 2014-15, up from 88.5% in 2013-14. In October the Mental Health Network – a membership organisation promoting excellence in services – called the shortage of acute beds for crisis care a national scandal. It is important that services are well-equipped to manage demand, and provide the necessary support at the right time.

Over two thirds (68%) reported that there was no training around mental health stigma provided for staff by their organisation. UNISON recognises that improvements have been made in recent years in attitudes towards mental health. However, these are only likely to continue if organisations invest in providing a good standard of training to their workers. It is important that NHS staff supporting those who are often vulnerable, are well-informed, and well-equipped with the latest training.

Mental health workers are in the front line of service delivery with first hand experience of the difficulties placed on them and service users. Some of the difficulties reported include long waiting times, reduced services, or out-of-area placements. Almost nine in ten (89%) participants told us that they did not think mental health services were adequately funded in the UK, and this issue was raised throughout the survey.

***What staff say:***

When asked what people loved most about their job, many mental health workers said it was the ability to make a difference to the lives of service users. Witnessing recovery, helping others, and working with colleagues were among the responses and highlight the passion many staff have for working in mental health. This is despite the difficult climate they continue to work in.

Whilst it was made clear in responses that many were passionate about their work and the rewarding nature of their role (for example, *"being able to make positive decisions"),* frustrations were also evident when respondents provided reasons for what they disliked most about their job. Comments included large amounts of paperwork to complete, increasing pressure on staff, and red tape.

***Conclusion***

UNISON is campaigning for mental health services to be prioritised and properly funded. Proposals to invest in services are welcome, but these need to deliver real change and improvement. NHS workers are asking for support to help those in need, and more effort must be made by the government to prioritise mental health services.

*What we are asking for*

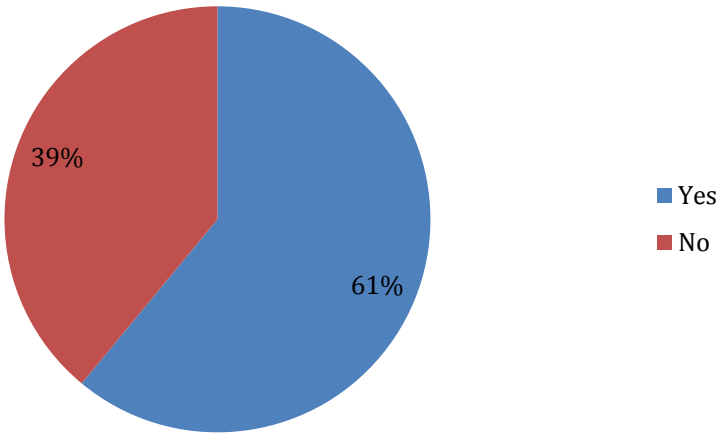
UNISON is calling for fair funding from the government, with a guarantee that money is made available and reaches the people it is intended for and not redirected for use in other areas.

The government must also do more to prioritise mental health services by recognising the links to physical health. Without clear commitment from government to achieve parity of esteem – giving mental health the same priority as physical health, mental health services will fail to support individuals in the best way.

The mental health survey highlights the passion that workers have. Mental health staff need to feel confident that they are well informed and best able to deliver the highest standards of care. UNISON is therefore calling for improved training of mental health workers along with a commitment to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff.

We know that mental health workers support clients on their journey to recovery, however there is often no one looking after the mental health of workers. A workforce that feels supported is more able to aid the recovery of those experiencing mental health issues, yet a quarter (26%) reported that there are no effective workplace interventions – such as counselling – offered to staff by their employer.

***In your opinion does your organisation look after the well being of its staff?***




UNISON believes that a greater commitment is needed to help the NHS tackle the stigma that continues to exist around mental health. *The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health* recognises that those experiencing mental health issues often still experience stigma, and that the human cost is unacceptable.

*This is a template letter to be sent to Clinical Commissioning Group leads.*
*Please feel free to adapt it with information on your local situation as much as possible. You may also wish to discuss this and send it jointly with your management, if appropriate.*

*[Insert branch name and address here]*
*[Date]*

Dear *[CCG chair]*

*[I/We]* are writing to you on behalf of NHS staff *[and the management]* working in *[insert trust name]*.

As you will know, mental health services are under immense pressure and have been struggling to cope with the huge increase in demand for services. Mental health services are also having to operate under severe financial constraints that are having a detrimental effect on staff and the service they can provide.

We were therefore extremely concerned to learn that *[insert CCG name here]* has been identified by the *Health Service Journal* ("Revealed: The CCGs cutting mental health budgets", 7 November, 2016) as one of the CCGs that has failed to increase spending on mental health in line with the increase in the overall budget, thereby failing to achieve the government's stated target of 'parity of esteem'.

*[We were also alarmed to hear that spending by the CCG on mental health services actually fell for this year, when compared to last year (delete if not applicable)]*

The failure to meet parity of esteem on mental health spending not only sends out a damaging message: that mental health is less important than physical health, but also means that mental health services will be put under even more pressure.

We know that many staff are already working in under-resourced teams and facing increased workloads, as well as having to deal with the detrimental impact on service users due to a lack of capacity.

Longer waiting times and less access to services mean that those in desperate need of support are suffering. UNISON conducted a survey of mental health workers last year in which 53% of respondents stated that cuts to mental health services meant that clients/service users were having to reach crisis point before accessing services.

In addition, the mental health of staff working in these settings is also under strain.

*[The letter would have more impact if branches were able to fill in some detail about local working conditions for mental health staff or stretched services etc here]*

We are therefore writing to urge you to consider increasing the funding for mental health services. We believe that more spending on mental health, at the very least in line with the overall budget increase, is essential.

We would be more than happy to meet with you in order to discuss this further or so we can raise some of the problems that we are experiencing locally when trying to provide the best mental health services possible.

We therefore look forward to hearing from you about what actions you plan to take to rectify the situation and how we could work with you to improve mental health services across the local area.

Yours sincerely

You can email your councillor by entering your postcode into this website: www.writetothem.com.

Below are some suggested words for an email or letter, but the message will be much stronger if you are able to add in local details.

Dear Councillor *[insert name(s)]*

**Mental health services**

As a local resident, I am writing to you to highlight the lack of investment in local mental health services.

As I am sure you are aware, in a January 2017 speech the prime minister reaffirmed the importance of achieving "parity of esteem" for mental health, in which mental health services are placed on a level with those for physical health.

It is therefore extremely worrying to learn that *[insert CCG name here]* clinical commissioning group has been identified by the *Health Service Journal* ("Revealed: The CCGs cutting mental health budgets", 7 November, 2016) as one of the CCGs that is failing to increase spending on mental health in line with the increase in their overall budget.

[It was also alarming to find out that spending by the CCG on mental health services actually fell for this year, when compared to last year. (delete if not applicable)]

The failure to meet parity of esteem on mental health spending not only sends out a damaging message – that mental health is less important than physical health – but also means that mental health services will be put under even more pressure.

I am sure you will agree with me that this is an issue of considerable importance and that the CCG should be held accountable to local people.

I am therefore calling on you to request that the CCG is called to a meeting of the council's health overview and scrutiny committee to explain how it will remedy this situation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

*[your name]*

# Building a local mental health campaign

This factsheet is designed as a reference for branches when considering how to build a local mental health campaign and to support UNISON's national campaign on mental health.

Visit UNISON's mental health web pages at unison.org.uk/mentalhealth to gain up-to-date information on our Mental Health Matters campaign.

## What to consider

Campaigns work best when people are able to engage with the key ideas and aims. Use the points below as a helpful starting point.

- Find out what the local issues are around mental health and shape your campaign around these
- Consider if messages are direct, using language that is easy to understand
- Set actions that members can actively become involved in
- Seek information from your members that will help inform your work such as a short survey

Consider linking your campaign to the key aims of UNISON's Mental Health Matters campaign

- See the section on funding in this pack for more information on campaigning around funding for mental health services
- Could your campaign focus on the stigma surrounding mental health? How can staff feel more comfortable talking about mental health – as individuals and as members of the healthcare team? Is more training required?
- Do staff feel confident managing workloads? Have cuts had a negative impact on teams? What are the issues affecting those delivering mental health services as well as the pressures on the mental health of other healthcare staff. Finding out more on these issues can allow members to identify with a campaign relevant to them

**UNISON Press release – November 2016**

Patients facing bed shortages and long waits because government not delivering on mental health funding, says UNISON

Mental health patients are facing bed shortages, longer waits for treatment and reduced support because of budget cutbacks, according to a new survey published today (Monday) by UNISON.

More than four in five (83%) staff working in mental health surveyed said a postcode lottery exists in the level of care that patients receive. In some cases, people with severe conditions such as chronic anxiety and schizophrenia are unable to access help until they have reached crisis point.

The findings are based on a survey of more than 1,000 staff such as therapists, nurses and social workers employed by mental health care services including the NHS and councils across the UK.

The survey also highlights how increased patient demand for services, coupled with cuts in services have left those staff left behind facing intolerable pressures.

More than four in five (85%) surveyed said they had experienced cutbacks, and nearly nine in ten (88%) reported an increased workload. This has led to longer waiting times for patients before they can get help, according to more than half (52%) of staff, says UNISON.

UNISON head of health Christina McAnea said: “The government has pledged £1.25bn for mental health but services are still having budgets reduced.

“No-one should have to wait weeks to get the support they need, and staff shouldn’t be placed under such pressure that they risk using mental health services themselves.

“With fewer staff and more people seeking help, it’s no wonder that employees who dedicate their lives to helping others feel at breaking point.

“Funding for mental health services must reach those in need and not be diverted to plug gaps elsewhere in the NHS.”

Notes to editors:

– The survey was based on responses from 1,161 staff working in mental health services.

– The number of mental health nurses has fallen by nearly 15% from 45,384 in 2010 to 38,774 in July this year. This is according to a written parliamentary answer from health minister Philip Dunne.

– Nearly two million people sought advice for mental health issues in 2015 according to the Health and Social Care Information Centre, up from about 1.2 million in 2010.

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## Mental health services

• Mental health workers are struggling to cope due to staff shortages and poorly funded services

• A BBC freedom of information request carried out in 2016, revealed that budgets for mental health trusts fell by 2% from 2013/14 to 2014/15, when hospital trusts' budgets were rising by 2.6%

• According to the Department of Health, in England, it is estimated that the economic cost of mental health to the economy, NHS and society as a whole is approximately £105bn

• Mental health has not been prioritised in the same way as physical health, although it is widely accepted that there is a correlation between the two

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## UNISON Mental health survey key findings

In May 2016, UNISON ran a survey of all members working in mental health settings and received over 1100 responses. Some key findings:

• 90% thought MH services were underfunded

• 70% reported there were increased waiting times for services

• 75% said they felt undervalued

• 60% thought their organisation did not look after the wellbeing of staff

• 68% had received no training around mental health stigma and how it could be tackled in the NHS

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## What is UNISON asking for?

• Fair funding from Government for mental health services, with a guarantee that money makes it through to the services that need it most

•A commitment from employers to improve the training of mental health workers creating a well informed workforce able to deliver the highest standards of care

•A commitment to support the mental health and wellbeing of mental health workers, including protection from bullying and harassment

•A greater commitment from Government to help the NHS tackle the stigma that continues to exist around mental ill health

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## Local campaigns

*Use this section to raise local issues or to encourage members to get involved:*

•Help support UNISON's Early Day Motion. Write to your MP asking them to sign up to EDM 597 Fair funding for mental health

•Find out the key issues affecting staff working in MH (Workload? Stress? Bullying?) as a way to kick-start your campaign

•Write to your CCG asking for more information about the allocation of mental health funding. CCGs have to sign off their budget for MH with the lead providers in the area

•Use UNISON's MH campaign materials to help with the campaign

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# mentalhealth MATTERS

Mental health services across the UK are struggling as a result of chronic underfunding and increased demand.

This is having a massive effect on people who use these services and on the health and wellbeing of the staff who provide them.

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Leaflet, page 1 of 2

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UNISON is the largest union in the NHS and we believe there should be proper investment and support for these vital services. We are calling for:

**Fair funding from government for mental health services**
Mental health workers in under-resourced teams see the impact of cuts to services firsthand. The result is increased waiting times and undervalued staff. UNISON wants to see fair funding from government, and assurances that money allocated to mental health services gets through to services that need it most.

**Improved training for mental health workers**
A well-trained workforce can deliver the highest standards of care. Better support and training for staff must be a priority for employers to help staff feel confident in their ability to provide the best support to each individual.

**Support for the mental health and wellbeing of staff**
Increased workloads, under-resourced teams, and the pressure on mental health workers have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of staff. This impacts on service users too as there is evidence that shows that healthy staff are able to deliver better care. Employers need to take action to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff in mental health settings.

**Commitment to tackle stigma around mental health**
UNISON is calling for greater commitment from government to help the NHS tackle the stigma around mental health. People experiencing mental health issues should not feel ashamed to seek support, and action needs to be taken to recognise the impact that a positive approach to mental health can have.

**Get involved**
You can help UNISON's campaign for better mental health services by getting involved in our campaign. You can find out more about the issues and about ways to get involved at unison.org.uk/mentalhealth

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**and get essential cover wherever you work**

**Join online at joinunison.org**

**Call us on 0800 171 2193**

**Ask your UNISON rep for an application form**

Leaflet, page 2 of 2

# mentalhealth MATTERS

Mental health services across the UK are in crisis. This is having a massive effect on both service users and staff.

UNISON, the largest union in the NHS, believes this has to change and is calling for:

- fair government funding for mental health services
- improved training for mental health workers
- support for the mental health and wellbeing of staff
- a commitment to tackle stigma around mental health

Find out more about the issues and how to get involved at unison.org.uk/mentalhealth


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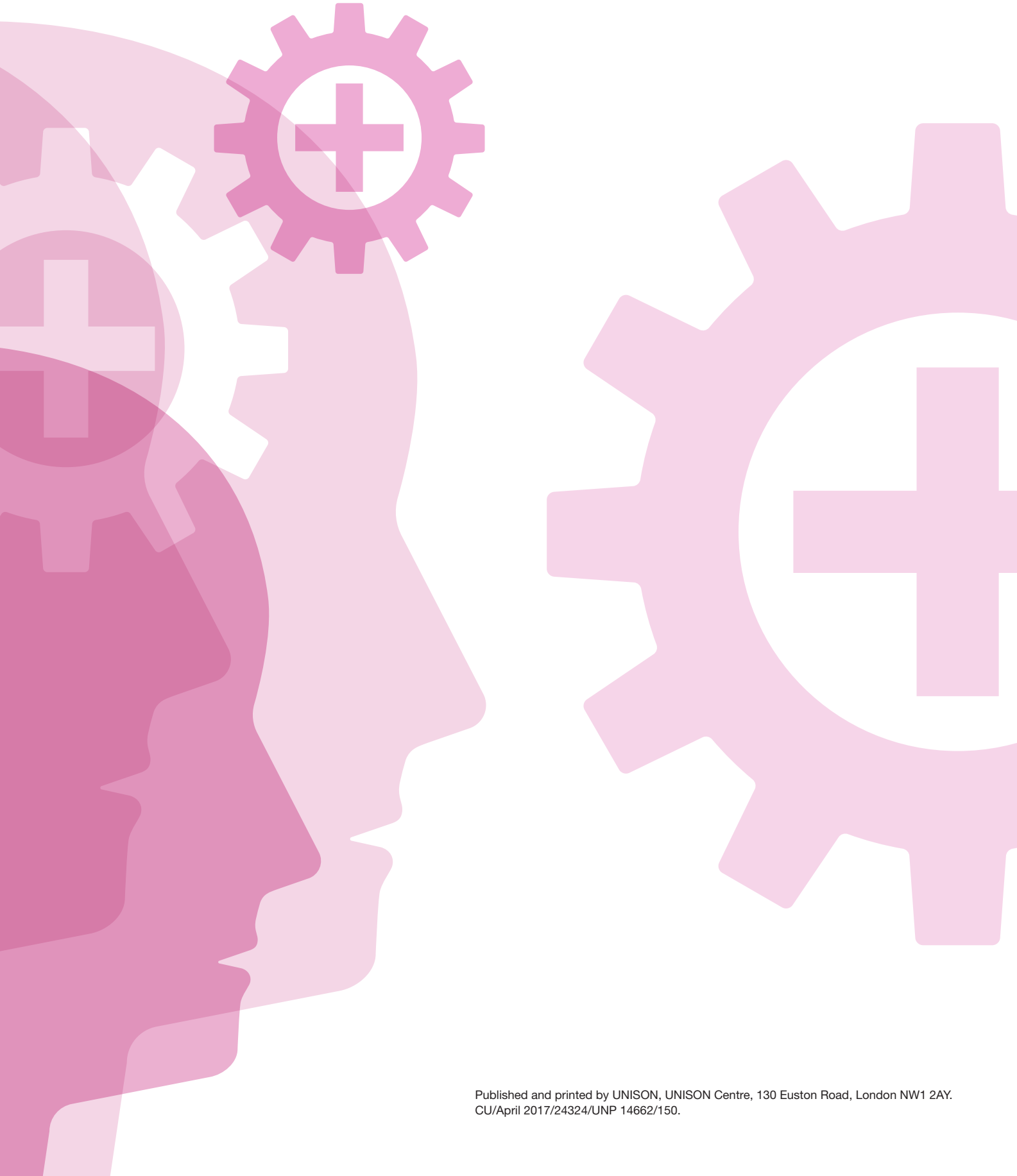

Published and printed by UNISON, UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY.
CU/April 2017/24324/UNP 14662/150.